

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O R 161110Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9669

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 3342

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF

SUBJECT: PAK/AFGHAN RELATIONS

REF: ISLAMABAD 3216; KABUL 2298

1. MY PURPOSE IN TALKING TO AGHA SHAHI LAST WEEK (ISLAMABAD 3216) ABOUT THE INCREASINGLY VITUPERATIVE PROPAGANDA BEING BROADCAST ACROSS THE PAK-AFGHAN BORDER IN BOTH DIRECTIONS AND, IN PARTICULAR, ABOUT THE WORRISOME PERSONAL ATAACKS ON THE HEADS OF STATE OF BOTH COUNTRIES, WAS TO WARN HIM THAT IN OUR VIEW CONDITIONS WERE GETTING SERIOUS. IT IS WHY, WHEN HE INDICATED LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF THE REAL SITUATION, THAT I PROVIDED HIM WITH FBIS REPORTING ON THE PROPAGANDA EXCHANGES. IT WAS MY THOUGHT THAT EVIDENCE THAT THE SECURITY OF BHUTTO HIMSELF MIGHT BE ENDANGERED WOULD CERTAINLY CAUSE A FULL SCALE REVIEW TO WHAT, IF ANYTHING, MIGHT BE DONE TO SEE THIS TYPE OF PROPAGANDA AMELIORATED OR HOPEFULLY STOPPED.

2. I BELIEVE THIS IS AS FAR AS WE SHOULD GO AT THIS TIME AND THAT WE SHOULD HOLD BACK UNTIL OUR INVOLVEMENT IS MORE URGENTLY REQUIRED AND, PERHAPS, ASKED FOR. WE, AND OTHERS, HAVE MADE KNOWN OUR CONCERNS. IF THE PAKS
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AND AFGHANS DO NOT THEMSELVES REACH THE CONCLUSION

THAT THE SITUATION NEEDS SOME COOLING, AND FURTHER INTERCESSION ON OUR PART IS NOT LIKELY TO BE PRODUCTIVE. ON THE CONTRARY, IF WE TO ATTEMPT TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF A MEDIATOR WE WOULD RUN RISKS WHICH IN MY VIEW WOULD NOT BE COMMENSURATE WITH POSSIBLE GAINS. WE WOULD BE PUTTING OUR PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE ON THE LINE IN INVOLVING OURSELVES IN A MATTER WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY PERIPHERAL TO THE CORE PROBLEM OF PAK-AFGHAN HOSTILITY. WERE WE TO SUCCEED IN WORKING OUT AN AGREEMENT ON PROPAGANDA, WE MIGHT HAVE TO MONITOR IT, AND I WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO SEE THE U.S. BECOME ROUTINELY INVOLVED IN SUCH AN EXERCISE.

3. I'M NOT AT ALL SURE THAT THE PROPOSAL TO PERSUADE THE GOP TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE TO CUT DOWN AD HOMINEM PROPAGANDA WOULD BE ADVISABLE EVEN IF WE WERE IN A POSITION TO PASS WORD THAT WAHID ABDULLAH HAD ASSURED US THE GOA WOULD FOLLOW SUIT. AFTER ALL, THE PAKS WERE ALREADY ASKED TO GO ALONG WITH THE PERCY INITIATIVE AND DID SO, WITHOUT RESULTS. IT MIGHT ALSO BE - BUT I DEFER TO KABUL ON THIS - THAT WAHID ABDULLAH, HAVING ALREADY BEEN SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED BY THE SENATOR PERCY INITIATIVE, WOULD NOT LIKE US TO PUT THE GOA AGAIN IN THE POSITION OF ACCEPTING OR TURNING DOWN A USG PROPOSAL FOR REDUCING THE PROPAGANDA WARFARE.

4. IN ANY EVENT, WE MAY BE MAKING SOME PROGRESS HERE (ISLAMABAD 3341). ADDITIONALLY, MFA TOLD POL COUNSELOR TODAY THAT THE FBIS MATERIAL I HAD PASSED TO AGHA SHAHI HAS NOW BEEN FORWARDED TO THE INFORMATION PEOPLE. THEY ARE CHECKING THE TRANSCRIPTS AGAINST THEIR OWN TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INFLAMMATORY BROADCASTS. I DON'T KNOW WHERE THIS WILL COME OUT, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT MFA IS NOW INVOLVING ITSELF MORE ACTIVELY THAN BEFORE IN THE PROPAGANDA PROBLEM, AND THAT IS A PROMISING DEVELOPMENT.
BYROADE

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